

**U.S. Department of Justice**

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Eastern District of Virginia*

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Norfolk, Virginia** – Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that on August 7, 2002, a federal jury in Norfolk, Virginia, convicted Rodney Hank Williams and Elizabeth House Janes on all counts of a 15-count indictment charging wire fraud, identity theft and false use of a social security number. Sentencing for both defendants is scheduled for October 24, 2002 before the Honorable Raymond A. Jackson.

The indictment charged Williams and Janes with devising a scheme to defraud various insurance companies by filing insurance claims using false names, social security numbers, dates of birth and addresses. Williams, using four aliases, filed five separate insurance claims between April 1997 and June 1998, four of which involved accidents alleging a hit-and-run driver as the cause. In addition to the false identities, Williams' alleged similar injuries resulting from these accidents, including head trauma and eye injury resulting in blurred vision. Since each of these accidents were filed using false means of identification, the insurance companies involved, including Farm Bureau, State Farm, Geico, Progressive and USAA, were not able to determine that their claimant had been involved in and suffered prior injuries from other accidents. As a result, these insurers paid out a combined total of approximately \$300,000.00 before the fraud was detected. All the accident claims were filed under the insurers' uninsured motorist coverage since they were reported as hit and run accidents.

In the claim he filed with the USAA claim's office in Norfolk, Williams assumed the identity of his brother, Kenneth G. Williams, and thereafter used his brother's social security number, date of birth, and address in pursuing the claim. Williams even went so far as to attend a deposition where he testified falsely that he was Kenneth G. Williams and answered all the questions under oath as if he were in fact his brother. USAA detected Williams' scheme when a private investigator discovered the true Kenneth G. Williams who denied being in an accident. Janes was Williams' girlfriend at the time of the accident and falsely reported the claim to USAA under her policy. Thereafter, she endorsed and deposited some of the USAA checks which had been made payable to Kenneth G. Williams. During his testimony, Williams' admitted to using false identities in the past but gave what he considered valid reasons for doing so. He also admitted to prior felony convictions which involved the use of false identities. Williams and Janes allegedly married in 2001 and resided in Live Oak, Florida, prior to their arrests in April of this year.

“Criminals who use false or stolen identities have become a major problem for businesses in the 21st century. This office will vigorously prosecute anyone who uses a false, fictitious or stolen identity”, said Mr. McNulty.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Stephen W. Haynie.